

BULLETIN
OF
THE MARITIME LIBRARY INSTITUTE

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Editor: Mrs. Mary Kinley Ingraham, M. A.
Acadia University Library
Wolfville, Nova Scotia

THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

Last July Herbert Putnam after forty years of eminent service as Librarian of Congress retired with the title of Librarian Emeritus and Archibald MacLeish was appointed his successor. Immediately there arose a storm of protest from librarians throughout the country, especially from leaders in the American Library Association. However, the appointment was confirmed, the storm subsided to low mutterings, and Mr. MacLeish sits in the office of the chief executive of the great library. At last report he was hanging the Magna Charta opposite the Declaration of Independence, and promising to give it faithful guard until the European calamities are over-past, and it may be safely returned to its rightful home.

The objection to the appointment raises a question of vital importance. Henry Seidel Canby puts it thus: "Should the executive head of a great library be a librarian specializing in the technique of book-getting and book-keeping, or should he be an executive, broadly trained, who has demonstrated his scholarship, his ability to organize, and his capacity for representing a great storehouse of intellectual energy?" We shall not attempt a categorical answer. There is no doubt that specialized training is a necessity for the most of us who would work in libraries, but is there any absolute norm by which we may determine the method and the content of that training? Despite the unquestioned value of the many schools of library service, we have to admit that the great librarians of the world from Zenodotus at Alexandria to Putnam at Washington were not graduates of library schools. Well, neither did the greatest teachers possess normal school diplomas. The writer of The Roving Eye in the Wilson Library Bulletin, after noting that Mr. MacLeish had weighed his potential contribution to the office before accepting the unsought appointment, adds: "In implying that Mr. MacLeish would be a goat among sheep at the Library of Congress because of his lack of technical library training, the A. L. A. overlooked the fact reported by M. Llewellyn Ranye, Director of the University of Chicago Libraries, that of the thirty-six administrative officers, heads of divisions and chief assistants who constitute the present staff, only three went through library school and nineteen are not even members of the American Library Association." All this is doubtless true but let no one think the M. L. I. Bulletin does not give its unqualified support to good library schools. We believe Archibald MacLeish would do the same.

CAMP LIBRARIES FOR THE CANADIAN MILITIA
-by Bramwell Chandler, President, M. L. I.-

The many thousands of Canadian youths who have been drawn from the normal contacts of civilian life to the restricted and monotonous atmosphere of the military camp stand to lose very much in the way of normal thought and training unless some provision is made for supplying that deficiency. The Canadian Association for Adult Education has secured from the Federal Government a grant enabling it to carry on a sort of Khaki College among the troops. It seems to me a very great service could also be provided by the government through the organization of a system of camp libraries in every training camp throughout Canada.

There is nothing radical in this proposal. When war broke out last September such a system was in operation in England in every camp. The range of their basic selection of books is amazing. Every taste and political affiliation is provided for.

In the last war Canadian Libraries made no direct effort to obtain government recognition of the need for such a service. The Toronto Public Library organized branches in some camps in Ontario, and in some places in the West efforts were made to provide some sort of service. No national effort whatever was made. Those camps within range of library authorities with sufficient wealth to provide books received some benefit, the others went without.

Apparently the same procedure is about to be repeated during this war. The Toronto Public Library has opened a new War Branch at the main military camp in Toronto. This is fine for Ontario boys. Scattered throughout the Maritimes, however, and no doubt many other places throughout Canada, are many small military units with absolutely no opportunity of keeping in touch with books, at a time when they have much more leisure than they would ordinarily have.

Can we not make representation to the proper authorities, both individually and as a group, that a proper organization be provided on an equitable scale for all the Canadian troops? The organization should be financed by the Department of National Defence and organized by special appointment from that office. The cost of such a service, as we know, would be trifling in comparison with the amount spent on other branches of the service. A bombing plane is said to cost in the vicinity of half a million dollars. A system of camp libraries which would be invaluable in the mere matter of sustaining morale would probably not cost one-fifth as much.

It would be a very good thing if the Federal Government could be brought to feel that the provision of books and libraries is a national responsibility. If the task is left to voluntary organizations such as the Y. M. C. A. it is bound to be completely amateurish and inefficient as a library service.

WAR AND THE LIBRARY

It is only human that one of our first considerations is: How will the war affect libraries and their work? For we know that we cannot shut ourselves up in our ivory tower and isolate ourselves from something which, sooner or later, is bound to affect everyone and every activity in some way. It has already made itself felt by those libraries making book purchases abroad, especially in what is now an enemy country. It is now impossible to import any books or periodicals from Germany. A patron of the University Library (the University of British Columbia) reported that a German work on Anthropology, destined ultimately for the Library, was burned by the customs on orders from Ottawa. Inter-library loans are also affected, as it is no longer possible to import a German work even for that purpose. It has also been noted that some articles have been omitted from British technical periodicals to avoid giving information to the enemy. Also many free documents from Great Britain have been stopped owing to war economies. (The above is copied from the November issue of The British Columbia Library Association Bulletin.)

CHILDREN'S READING: Excerpts from an Address
before the Kensington Home and School Association. November 9, 1939.
-by Dorothy Cullen

... As a librarian, one of a class interested in books and reading, speaking to a group whose common interest is children, I felt that the subject "Children's Reading" would be an appropriate one for my talk. It is also specially suitable at this season, since National Children's Book Week is to be observed in North America next week, November 12 to 18. Book Week, which this year celebrated its 21st birthday was organized to dramatize and intensify national interest in Children's reading; it serves to remind parents, teachers, and librarians of the power of good books to stir the minds and delight the hearts of boys and girls. Love of reading is a priceless possession, and the time to cultivate it is in childhood. From earliest years, children can be sold the idea that reading is a pleasure rather than a task. If before they go to school, they have books in their home, and consider reading them as part of their play, they are taking the first step to realizing the joys of reading.

Directing young children's reading is fairly simple. Parents and teachers can read to them or see that they have a chance to read the finest in the literature suited to their age; and the children, from associating with the best, will form high standards for their future reading. Each child is a separate problem with individual tastes and abilities, but most children at any given age have certain common interests in reading.

I suppose you have all noticed how rhymes and jingles appeal to very little children--they respond with pleasure to little action rhymes such as "Pat-a-cake"; and before they learn to talk, they like to look at pictures and point out objects they recognize--a dog, a car, a baby. The delight children take in these things leads up to their first books--Mother Goose books and picture books of familiar things. Besides the Mother Goose rhymes, small children enjoy having read to them any poetry with some rhythm and swing such as Stevenson's "Child's garden of verse" and the amusing fanciful poems in A. A. Milne's "When we were very young." For children of three and four who will sit still to listen to a story, there are many attractive picture story books for an older person to read while the child follows the pictures. Some of the books most popular with children of this age are: "Johnny Crow's garden", with its comical pictures and verses about animals, Marjorie Flack's lively books about Angus the Scotty, the old classic "Tale of Peter Rabbit" and "The story of little black Sambo", Helen Bannerman's account of a little darkie's adventures with three tigers. Your little boy or girl will demand that these stories be read again and again, until he knows them word for word, and can describe just by looking at the picture what is happening at any point in the story. One spring a little boy three and half was visiting at the house where I boarded; I used to read "Little black Sambo" to him--sometimes two or three times a day. Each time he would ask the same questions about the pictures, and pick me up if I didn't always give the same explanation. For real satisfaction, the child should have a few story books of his own, because each one will last him a long time.

During their first school years, fairy tales are a necessity for children. Smaller children love the stories with a bit of humor or repetition of phrases such as in "The Gingerbread boy." Grimm's "Household stories" are universal favorites, and the same type of story will be found in Lang's "Blue fairy book," Wiggin's "Tales of laughter" and Jacobs' "English fairy tales." The tales of wonder and romance by Hans Christian Andersen and in the Arabian Nights appeal to children when they are a little older.

When children attain some facility in reading for themselves, they enjoy stories of boys and girls of their own age. If the events in the story are such as might happen to the child himself, it makes the reading easier; but interest in the doing of the story people will often carry him on in spite of strange names and customs. Lucy Perkins' books about the "Scotch twins", "Eskimo twins" and others

are admirably written with well chosen vocabulary and absolutely natural incidents.

Following the age of magic comes the age of fact, when children want information for its own sake; they love to pore over an encyclopedia, and store up in their minds collections of facts often quite unrelated to one another or to any of the child's activities. Everyday happenings are wonders to these youngsters; books about them can be presented without any dilution of fiction or fantasy. If a book has bright pictures or clear photographs and tells about machinery, animals, far off countries, it will be received with joy by children of ten or thereabouts. The books by the Petershams "Story book of Food, Trains, Houses, Wheat," etc. are good examples of this kind of book. The "Wonder book of why and how," "Wonder book of the wild," etc. are also rather popular.

The slogan of Book Week this year is "Books around the world" calling attention to books from and about all countries. Story and travel books about foreign countries are interesting in themselves, and give children a valuable background for their study of the world. They supply the "feeling" of the country which children do not get when they learn in their geography lessons about the climate resources and trade. I should like to call attention to the many pleasing books in the Kensington library that will conduct children on a tour of the world. They can spend some time in Norway with "Solve Suntrap", visit Switzerland in the book "High in the Mountains", have some real Irish fun with "Barney the Donkey", and take a thrilling trip through Africa in the book "Jerry on Safari".

In this talk I am dealing with only a few of the kinds of books boys and girls like. Doubtless you have seen reading varieties I have not mentioned. If you wish to become better acquainted with the books available to your children you might spend some time looking over the children's section in the Kensington branch of the P. E. I. Libraries. By getting to know some of the books and authors, you will be able to take an enlightened interest in what your boy or girl is reading. It is practically impossible to direct all a child's reading after he begins to range widely for himself. But if you are acquainted with the books yourself you can discuss them with him and make suggestions about interesting books, that at the same time keep him on the track of good literature. The boy or girl who reads easily and happily has within his reach realms of recreation and information that would never otherwise be his. As Horace Mann has said: "Good books are to the young what the warming sun and refreshing rain of spring are to the seeds which have lain dormant in the frosts of winter."

THE LIBRARY'S BILL OF RIGHTS

Today indications in many parts of the world point to growing intolerance, suppression of free speech, and censorship, affecting the rights of minorities and individuals. Mindful of this, the Council of the American Library Association publicly affirms its belief in the following basic policies which should govern the services of free public libraries:

1. Books and other reading matter selected for purchase from the public funds should be chosen because of value and interest to people of the community, and in no case should the selection be influenced by the race or nationality or the political or religious views of the writers.

2. As far as available material permits, all sides of questions on which differences of opinion exist should be represented fairly and adequately in the books and other reading matter purchased for public use.

3. The library as an institution to educate for democratic living should especially welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and the discussion of current public questions. Library meeting rooms should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of their beliefs or affiliations. (The Council of the American Library Association adopted this statement in June 1939, and recommended its adoption by governing boards of individual libraries.)

AMERICAN LIBRARIANSHIP

The Old World Looks at the New in Respect to Libraries

American Librarianship from a European Angle: an attempt at an evaluation of policies and activities; by Wilhelm Munthe, Director of the University Library at Oslo. Chicago, A. L. A., 1939. 188 p.

The book listed above is easily the outstanding publication of the year in the library field. It was in March, 1936, that the president of the Carnegie Corporation invited Dr. Munthe, the Director of the University at Oslo, Norway, to make an unhurried visit to the United States and Canada as a basis for preparing a report on the library policies and practices of these countries, especially those of the United States. This volume is the report. It is nothing if not candid. The author admits that his "philological-historical university education," his personal and professional experience in the university library at Oslo, and further studies in several continental universities, have tended to identify him with the continental tradition: but on the other hand he claims that he has a vital interest in American library methods and had studied them with zeal. Then he takes up his subject and turns the searchlight of his vigorous and well trained personality upon the library situation in all its phases. Dr. Keppel, who asked Dr. Munthe to make this survey and write the report, writes of him in the Introduction as follows: "There is a ring of sincerity in his praise, and, when he thinks we need it, he hits straight and hits hard." The Bulletin hopes that every Maritime librarian will read this inspiring and enlightening book.

NOTES AND PERSONALS

It is not too early to make plans for the Sixth Annual Conference of the M. L. I. to be held at Moncton next June. By all means let us have a full attendance. We expect to publish some notes on the Moncton Public Library in the March Bulletin.

Dr. W. C. Milner, former President of the Maritime Library Association, died recently at Edmonton, aged ninety-three years.

Miss E. M. A. Vaughan writes from Saint John, N. B.--

The following news items may be of interest for the December Bulletin:

Miss Ethel Shaw has been confined to her home by illness for five weeks but is now convalescing.

Miss Doreen Harper is at present in Fredericton where she is cataloguing and classifying the Normal School Library.

The Saint John Branch of the Institute has held two meetings this season. At the October meeting officers were elected as follows: President, Miss E. M. A. Vaughan; Secretary-Treasurer, Miss D. L. Dobson; Executive and Programme Committee: Miss M. Berton, Miss M. Golding. Miss Golding gave a very interesting talk on her recent trip to Labrador and Newfoundland.

At the November meeting we had a book review of Keverne's Tales of Old Inns by Miss M. Berton; and then a talk on the aims and work of the Family Welfare Association by the Executive Secretary of the Association, Mrs. Arthur Warneford.

Our Library is cooperating with the military authorities, and we have made arrangements that any member of the Army, Navy, or Air Force stationed in the City may be admitted as a regular borrower on having his registration card signed by his commanding officer, who thus takes the responsibility of checking up on any

books in the event of a sudden movement of troops.

Children's Book Week was observed in Saint John.

Miss Emilie Raymond, Librarian of Yarmouth Public Library, wrote on the first of November: We shall observe Book Week and have the usual tea. We have just purchased the second edition of Webster's New International Dictionary.

Miss Mary S. Clark, formerly of Saint John, N. B., a graduate of Acadia University and of the Library School of the University of Toronto, has a responsible position on the library staff of Leland Stanford University, Palo Alto, California.

The report of Mount St. Vincent Library was inadvertently omitted from the September issue of the Bulletin. Mount St. Vincent College is located at Rockingham, N. S., not far from the City of Halifax. The Librarian is Sister Francis de Sales. The following excerpts are from the report presented at the Halifax Conference: The library now contains 19,000 books. The increase during the past year has been 3,800. The library serves not only Mount St. Vincent College and Mount St. Vincent Academy, but also the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity, including the Novitate, the Postulate, and the Normal School ... Activities during the past year include a Book Week display held in the main library in October and a Catholic Press display during the month of February. This latter was held in the Library Science room, in conjunction with a students' project on the History of Books and Printing ... A lending library, situated in the lodge at the North Gate, caters to about 125 borrowers, men and women, boys and girls, and even tiny tots ... A Boys' Club met weekly during the winter at the Library and in addition to reading enjoyed a series of lessons in manual training.

Miss Nora Bateson, the Director of Libraries for Nova Scotia, has been lecturing and surveying the book situation in Lunenburg County.

Miss Mary Falconer of Halifax was heard over C B A on Children's Libraries, 5 December.

Best Christmas wishes of the M. L. I. Bulletin to its kind readers!